

Keeping Technology in Balance

Discussion Notes

ED Council preconference Workshop
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As the world and education continue to become ever more wired and infused with technology lets step back to take the big picture look at technology in education.

While there are many positives to tech use in schools, what are the negatives?

What role should technology play in New Church Education?

Please join me for an open discussion on how to maintain an appropriate level of technology in our schools.

Presenters Note: I attempted to organize and summarize both the discussion and the written answers in a readable and orderly way. This is not an official statement or record other than that of a discussion/brainstorm. Also note that there is no consensus on the items it contains since it is the beginning of a conversation, not the end of one. Thanks and feel free to contact me.

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Discussion Questions

1. What is lost because of technology and does it have value?

- Children don't spend as much time:
 - outside/nature(in the Lord's creation)
 - manipulating the physical environment/hands-on/3D[real, not simulated]
 - noted as “useful/critical foundations for the realm of rational later on”
 - developing large motor skills
 - developing their imagination/in imaginative play
 - noted as “useful/critical foundations for the realm of rational later on”
 - using 5 senses/having multisensory experience
 - in silence
- Skills
 - handwriting
 - math facts
 - writing with a pencil/pen
- Context/Framework for facts/Mental Framework
- Time
- Higher-level thinking skills
- Soul
- Imaginary games/how to play
- Ability to endure silence
- manners/common courtesies
- face-to-face communication/interaction
- boundaries(of all kinds both good and bad, personal and worldwide)

2. What are the negative effects of using technology?

- Loss of
 - Thinking
 - Innocence
 - Attention span
 - Silence
 - time
 - knowledge of how things work (mechanically, physically etc.)
 - handwriting, spelling, grammar
 - reflective thinking
 - computer skills/math sense
 - time [ex. Learning how to use it]
 - money [financial cost of technology]
 - patience/increase of impatience
- Struggle to keep up/Teachers can struggle to keep up with students
- Isolation
- Modeling of parents/adults
- Disruption: especially cell phones going off
- Real human contact
- Students become passive observers
- develop need for input/noise
- dependency on technology

3. What are the long term implications of using technology on a personal, school and society scale?

- Better inventions
- growth
- connections around the world
- Multimedia -- true form (not just screen)
- Technology changes: how do we keep up with rapidly increasing changes
- isolation
- no delay for gratification -- instant access
- more people will know about the Lord and writings

4. What can be done to mitigate the losses and negative effects of technology?

- educate people, especially educators, about how to use [technology] effectively
- make hard choices
- curriculum/ make sure foundations are there/ what are we giving up?/cut something
- look at the big picture/Word
- allow silence
- force silent reading
- be in nature
- Offer hands-on activities: handwork, movement etc.
- don't overuse technology
- what is educationally sound? Research?
- [Presentation Zen](#) by Garr Reynolds
- always use technology and at least one other something

General Discussion Comments (in no particular order)

- What are gimmicks? What is an educational tool?
- Does the screen take the place of the teacher? of real life? of outside?
- TV: world expanding stuff vs. stupid stuff
- TV/Computers are Two-dimensional (2D)
- How can we do the best out of technology?
- How can we protect from the harmful effects of technology?
- How can use these technology to actually interact with the students? E.g. document reader [document camera?]
- SmartBoard: uses two senses reading, writing (is it more than a [glorified chalkboard](#)), can e-mail notes, can easily flip back to a prior screen
- Technology is not right or wrong; it is a tool.
- How much can we “control” it or “stop” it? What are the best things we can get from it?
- [Jeremy Rifkin](#) -- be aware of fears?
- Two issues: a) dangers of technology -- Internet etc. and b) how do we use technology effectively in the classroom? (Don't all jump off the bridge)
- Lord has allowed it to help spread his church.
- Can be very linear -- PowerPoint -- like A, B., C., etc.
- [What/there are]aspects of learning that can be done at the computer.
- [Technology] doesn't use five senses
- subdiscussion: technology use in primary grades (what is a decision based on?)
- Kids change world. Outside the classroom: phone, MP3, video; they leave it at the door; we need to be a part and connected to their world
- necessity vs. convenience
- digital natives versus digital immigrants ([Mark Prensky](#))
- In the 1990s computers work in isolation; in the 2000 computers are insatiable connectors
- everything seems to come at the kids -- can they be the eager learners?
- Younger generations don't see it as a loss
 - older generation does
 - younger generations don't always realize what they are losing
- [Jeremy Rifkin](#)'s book -- make workshop [could not find a book by that title]
- What are our developmental philosophies/theories? What are we building on?
- Some schools are not using technology until certain age
- if we are going to use it, we need to know it.
- Time lag until digital natives begin to infiltrate the teaching ranks. [We are already there]
- technology is a nonissue for digital natives
- Subject/time allocations:
 - how do we add new things?
 - What do we do?
 - Switch focus [focus is switching]
 - learn how to learn
 - what is core?
 - It is easy to teach facts
 - use it as a launching pad to teach higher order concepts

LCM's inherent in acknowledgment:

- there is value in face-to-face communication and interaction
- there is value in the physical world (power of ultimates from the heavily doctrines for new Church)